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Success is a relative term, but the qualities a person must possess to achieve any success are similar. A successful community college student is well balanced, ambitious, and open-minded.

Maintaining balance in one's life is crucial for obtaining success. The majority of my peers work part-time or even full-time jobs. Both education and work play essential and symbiotic roles in the lives of community college students. Unlike traditional university students, it's common that community college students cannot afford to stop working to focus purely on school. This is why community college is the perfect option for those who need to save for higher level education. In my case, I work two part-time jobs, as well as attending 18 credit hours of classes. I thrive on balancing work and school, and I use an online calendar to help alleviate stress. This way I am also able to find time to workout, keep up with chores, and spend quality social time with my friends; all things that positively contribute to my mental health. Balance ensures future success: higher education cannot be afforded and therefore achieved without employment, and in order to progress professionally, higher education is necessary. Incorporating balance in life is a critical skill for successful community college students.

Success is unachievable without the motivation to reach a goal; community college students are goal oriented. There are many reasons why a student may not be motivated to pick up an extra class or do an extra credit assignment. I know students who miss class because no assignment is due that week. However, it is the students who consistently show ambition, who ultimately find success. I believe that ambition stems from passion, and passion may come from a place of interest. If a person is excited about a course of study, and how education will lead to a desired career field, then they are more likely to be motivated to excel in school. Currently, I am still exploring my options in terms of majors and potential career fields, yet this does not mean that I am any less passionate, motivated, or ambitious. I just find my ambition in other aspects. I am an ambitious student because I believe in myself and what I am able to accomplish. I know that whatever path I choose to take, I want to be as well prepared as possible so that I can be the most successful community college student that I can be. This is what motivates me to study for tests, complete assignments, and go above and beyond in my classes. I know that working hard brings success in a community college setting.

With an open-mind, there is very little that a person cannot achieve. There is so much more to be open-minded about than solely for academic gain. A student should be open to opportunities that may come their way, help from fellow students or faculty members, or even how much one can accomplish. By being open-minded, I have been able to make the most of my community college experience. At first, my view of community college was to get in and out as quickly as possible. However, as I grew and still continue to grow, I find myself accomplishing more than I could have previously imagined. When beginning classes in the previous fall semester, I decided to include an American Sign Language class per a friend's recommendation. The course was not required for my program, and so I was skeptical about taking it, knowing that it would contribute to my already hefty workload. By being open-minded about my friend's experience, as well as my academic capacity, I was able to participate in a course that I fully enjoyed. Now I am planning to continue my ASL education throughout community college, and incorporate it into my bachelor's degree. I would have never been able to have this option, had I not been so open to taking the course in the first place. Successful community college students are open to the opportunities that may seem off the beaten path.

Through the use of these skills, I have accomplished a great deal throughout my journey as a community college student. I will carry these qualities as I move further through my higher education and into my career. While my goals in life may change, the skills that I have learned and used while being a student at Central Piedmont Community College will help me be successful no matter where my life takes me.